

Annual School Report 2023 School Year

St Joseph's Primary School, Quirindi



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Principal
Pauline Long

About this report

St Joseph's Primary School is registered by the NSW Education Standards Authority (NESA) and managed by the Diocese of Armidale Catholic Schools Office (CSO), as the 'approved authority' for the Registration System formed under Section 39 of the NSW Education Act 1990.

The Annual Report provides the school community with fair, reliable and objective information about school performance measures and policies, as determined by the Minister for Education.

The report outlines to the school community information about initiatives and developments of major interest and importance and the achievements arising from the implementation of the school Annual Improvement Plan.

The report demonstrates accountability to the Federal and State Government regulatory bodies, the parish and school community and the CSO. This report, approved by the CSO, monitors school processes to ensure compliance with all NESA requirements for Registration.

This report complements, and is supplementary to, school newsletters and other regular communications. It is available on both school and CSO websites by 30 June 2024 following its submission to NESA.

The contents of this report may be tabled for discussion at various parent forums, including the School Advisory Council meetings and all information is public.

Further information about the school or this report may be obtained by contacting the school on 02 6746 1033 or by visiting the school's [website](#).



1.0 Messages

1.1 Principal's Message

There were many people who assisted in the development of the school as a Catholic learning community. In particular, special thanks are extended to the parent body and the school staff for all their generous efforts. St Joseph's Primary School is indeed blessed to have such dedicated and enthusiastic people supporting the school.

St Joseph's Primary School has had a successful year despite facing staffing challenges. It took until Semester 2 to be fully staffed and the lack of casual teachers is an ongoing issue. However, staff went above and beyond to support each other and to ensure every student received a quality education.

The school continued to work on embedding the Living Well, Learning Well Framework. This framework provides clear direction for student support in faith formation, learning and well-being. It stresses the importance of highly skilled adults working in teams, providing a safe, productive and inclusive community. Education is a shared privilege and responsibility. Students and staff embraced the Living Well, Learning Well philosophy enthusiastically, collectively striving to ensure the school is a safe place for learning where all members are valued, cared for and respected.

Two major successes for this year were:

- Employing a Canteen Supervisor. This supervisor has done an outstanding job, and an enormous amount of positive feedback from the school community has been received.
- Engaging a teacher from the Tamworth Conservatorium of Music to teach whole class lessons and to offer private individual music lessons across a range of instruments. The school community has been very supportive of this initiative.

During the year, parents/ carers were provided with many opportunities to become involved in their child's education through 3 Way Learning Conferences, liturgies, sports days, open classrooms, BBQs to celebrate the start of the year and a Book Fair. The Annual School Survey, conducted during Term 3, indicated very strong parental satisfaction with St Joseph's Primary School.

Many positive outcomes were achieved during the year:

- As Principal, it was a privilege to witness the personal learning growth of each student. Students' individual learning needs were catered for by dedicated staff who carefully analysed data to inform their teaching and learning programs.
- A focus on creating ambitious yet achievable learning goals resulted in students taking greater ownership of their learning. This, in turn, resulted in improved learning outcomes in reading, mathematics and writing.
- The school continued to provide extra opportunities for primary students to extend their learning through a Times Tables Challenge, Brain Olympiad, a Spelling Bee and by entering the ICAS competitions.
- COVID-19 funding allowed for small group targeted intervention in the teaching of writing. This focus area was chosen because students are required to write in all Key Learning Areas. Targeted students displayed positive growth in the ability to write effectively.
- School facilities were updated, including the school canteen and learning resources for the Infants students. A chicken coop was installed alongside the school gardens along with a colourful hundreds chart for outside learning opportunities.
- The Primary students participated in a very successful excursion to Lake Keepit. This was made affordable for families by a grant from the local Farming for Kids Association and the hard work of the PT&F.
- Due to the generous Arts grant from the Catholic Schools Office, Infants students attended a professional performance in Tamworth.



- Students had the opportunity to participate in school based sport as well as diocesan fixtures in swimming, athletics and cross country. Talented athletes nominated for sporting trials to represent the Diocese of Armidale in a wide variety of team sports. One student attended the NSW PSSA Athletics Championships.
- St Joseph's continued to successfully apply for Sporting Schools Grants and students received specialist coaching in volleyball, Australian rules football and tennis.

Pauline Long
Principal

1.2 A Parent Message

What a great year this was for the children and the school community. The communication between home and school was fantastic. An example of this is the 3 Way Parent, Student and Teacher Learning Conferences. The students love sharing their individual learning goals with their parents or carers. This has encouraged the children to reach their goals and to come home excited about having done so. Music has been a big hit this year with the students. Being a rural school with limited creative arts options close by, it is great that St Joseph's provides the opportunity to have a specialist music teacher.

Michelle Cortis
SAC representative and PT&F Secretary
School Advisory Council and Parent Teacher and Friends Association

2.0 This Catholic School

2.1 The School Community

St Joseph's Primary School is located in Quirindi and is part of the St Brigid's Parish which serves the communities of Quirindi, Werris Creek and Willow Tree, from which the school families are drawn.

Last year the school celebrated 147 years of Catholic education.

The parish priest, Father Kingsley Etoh, is involved in the life of the school.

2.2 Catholic Life and Religious Education

St Joseph's Primary School follows the Armidale Diocesan Religious Education Curriculum and uses the student text *To Know, Worship and Love*, as authorised by the Bishop of Armidale, Michael Kennedy.

Encouraging the faith formation of staff continued to be a priority. Staff met each Monday morning for staff prayer and all professional learning meetings commenced with prayer. Staff had the opportunity to attend a school-based full day retreat facilitated by the CSO Renewal team. In addition, they had the option of attending a retreat day organised by the Catholic Schools Office and facilitated by the LaSallian Mission Team.

Each class started the year by teaching *Come! Share the Spirit* units which were devised to increase students' knowledge of the school crest, foundations and motto. These lessons integrated the Living Well, Learning Well rules for Living to assist each class to establish a calm and collaborative learning environment.

We welcomed a new Religious Education Coordinator who worked closely with Father Kingsley, the parish priest, to prepare meaningful masses, liturgies and class visits for the students. The parish



sacramental program continued with lessons facilitated by teachers and catechists for Holy Communion, reconciliation and confirmation.

Families were welcomed to masses and liturgies to celebrate the start of the school year, St Patrick's Day, St Joseph's Day, Catholic Schools' Week, Mother's Day, Father's Day, Grandparents' Day and the end of another successful year.

Students continued to strive to help other communities through raffles, multi days, silly sock and crazy hair fundraisers. The school collected many goods for Christmas Hampers for distribution to local families.

Students in Year 6 in Catholic schools in the Diocese of Armidale undertake the Diocesan Religious Education (RE) Test annually. The test consists of 30 multiple-choice questions.

Results of the test are analysed by teachers and are used to inform teaching and learning in Religious Education.

Our School's average result (as a mark out of 30)	
Year 6	23

2.3 School Enrolment

St Joseph's Primary School caters for children from Years K to 6. The following table indicates the student enrolment characteristics:

	Year K	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	TOTAL 2023	TOTAL 2022
Male	2	2	5	4	6	4	5	28	96
Female	6	6	7	4	5	3	3	34	77
Totals	8	8	12	8	11	7	8	62	173

2.4 Student Attendance

In order for students to reach their full potential it is important that they attend school regularly. Whilst it is the parents' legal duty to ensure their children attend school regularly, staff, as part of their duty of care, monitor attendance each day. The class roll is marked every day and rolls are checked each week by the Principal or their delegate. The school uses the attendance coding system adopted in all NSW schools. Unexplained absences are followed up promptly by staff. Parents are requested to provide a satisfactory explanation for an absence by means such as a written note, telephone call, SMS message or email to the school, preferably on the first day of absence and certainly within seven days. The Principal is made aware of sustained student absences or absences reflecting a pattern. In these situations, the Principal or delegated staff member contacts the parent/guardian. Parents are encouraged to arrange medical and other necessary appointments outside school hours. Prolonged periods of absence occur from time-to-time for various reasons. In these cases, students and their parents meet with the Principal to discuss the leave request.

The average student attendance rate for the school during 2023 is shown in the following table.



	Year K	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	All Years
Average Student Attendance Rates	91.0%	85.0%	90.0%	87.0%	91.0%	88.0%	84.0%	88.0%

Managing Student non-attendance

Regular attendance at school is essential if students are to maximise their potential. The school, in partnership with parents, is responsible for promoting the regular attendance of students. While parents are legally responsible for the regular attendance of their children, school staff, as part of their duty of care, monitor part or whole day absences.

School staff, under the Principal's leadership, support the regular attendance of students by:

- providing a caring teaching and learning environment which fosters students' sense of wellbeing and belonging to the school community.
- monitoring engagement of individual students in their learning and identifying strategies to enhance engagement.
- maintaining accurate records of student attendance.
- recognising and rewarding excellent and improved student attendance.
- implementing programs and practices to address attendance issues when they arise.

The Principal is responsible for supporting the regular attendance of students by ensuring that:

- parents and students are regularly informed of attendance requirements and the consequences of unsatisfactory attendance.
- all cases of unsatisfactory attendance and part or full day absences from school are investigated promptly and that appropriate intervention strategies are implemented.
- intervention strategies for students with unsatisfactory attendance may include academic case management, social case management, referral to counselling and parent/ carer involvement.
- the Director of Catholic Schools or designated Catholic Schools Office Armidale officer is provided with regular information about students for whom chronic non-attendance is an issue and for whom previous strategies have failed to restore regular attendance.

When the Catholic Schools Office Armidale is notified of a student for whom chronic non-attendance is an issue and previous strategies have failed, the Principal and the System Performance Leader will convene a meeting with the family, the student, and other agencies if required, to develop a Return to School Plan.

2.5 Staff Profile and Teacher Standards

Teacher Qualifications / Staff Profile		Number of Teachers
1.	Those teachers at the NESA Teacher Accreditation Provisional or Conditional level.	1
2.	Those teachers at the NESA Teacher Accreditation Proficient level.	8
3.	Those teachers at the NESA Teacher Accreditation Highly Accomplished level.	0
4.	Those teachers at the NESA Teacher Accreditation Lead level.	0



Teacher Qualifications / Staff Profile		Number of Teachers
5.	Teachers with recognised qualifications to teach Religious Education.	7
6.	Number of staff identifying as Indigenous employed at the school.	1
7.	Total number of non-teaching staff employed at the school.	8

2.6 Initiatives Promoting Respect and Responsibility

The school ensures that at every available formal and informal opportunity the values of respect and responsibility are promoted. We want every student to understand and appreciate that they are part of both the school and the local community. The school models and teaches students about respect and responsibility in a number of ways:

- The values of respect and responsibility lie at the heart of Catholic schools, and underpin all policies and procedures. The Living Well Learning Well Framework for Student Support teaches students the importance of respect and responsibility. The students discuss and agree upon ways they can be safe at school, ways they can value, respect and care for one another and ways they can be a learner. The agreed practices are displayed in every classroom and referred to regularly. Each week the class has a specific focus from these rules for living. Weekly awards encourage students to be valued, respected and cared for.
- Students and staff contributed generously to social justice appeals, including St Vincent de Paul and Caritas.
- Citizenship awards were presented at whole school assemblies, while outstanding citizenship was recognised at the Annual Presentation Assembly with awards from the Catholic Women's League, Quota and the Lions Club.
- The PosiSchools Wellbeing program was implemented during Term 3 to encourage students to put their best foot forward and help others. It is designed to help students understand the power of a positive mindset, to be kind, the importance of relationships and how to respect others.

2.7 Parent, Student and Teacher Satisfaction

The opinions and ideas of parents, students and teachers are valued and sought. Their suggestions are incorporated into planning for and achieving improved outcomes for students. This year, the school used a variety of processes to gain information about the level of satisfaction with the school from parents, students and teachers.

Parent Satisfaction

The school participated in an online survey. Thirty-three percent of families completed the survey. The collective feedback was overwhelmingly supportive of the school. In particular, parents noted the small class sizes, the open communication between the school and families, the dedication of staff to cater for individual learning needs and the strong sense of community. They appreciated the continual improvements to school facilities and the different learning options in classrooms.



Student Satisfaction

Years 4-6 students participated in an online survey with a 71% completion rate.

A very high ranking was given to students being encouraged to care for others and that the school celebrates student achievements. The students expressed appreciation for the teachers and the facilities provided for them to learn. The students noted they were supported in their learning, there were staff members to go to for help or advice and staff encouraged students to do their best. Students also expressed that they had the opportunity to do interesting activities.

Staff Satisfaction

Staff members are encouraged to contribute to the effective running of the school through regular staff prayer, staff meetings, professional learning team meetings, input in the school newsletter and through online surveys. One hundred percent of staff completed the annual online school satisfaction survey. This survey indicated staff get a lot of satisfaction from working at this school. They were well-supported and positive about the whole school learning initiatives. The school rated very highly on encouraging professional learning and improvement in practice as well as explicit teaching of core Catholic Principles and Values.

3.0 Teaching and Learning

3.1 School Curriculum

The school provides an educational program based on and taught in accordance with the NESA syllabuses for Primary Education. The Key Learning Areas (KLAs) are English, Mathematics, Science and Technology, Human Society and its Environment, Creative Arts and Personal Development, Health and Physical Education. In addition, the school implements the curriculum requirements of the Catholic Schools Office Armidale.

Religious Education in Catholic schools is a mandatory KLA included in the curriculum for students in each year group. St Joseph's Primary School is committed to providing a quality education that meets the needs of all students.

St Joseph's Primary School continued to build on system initiatives of a Catholic Professional Learning Community to improve student outcomes. All staff were clearly focused on providing quality learning experiences based on student needs. Teachers worked collaboratively to plan, assess and analyse student data. Learning Walks and Talks occurred across the school, with staff and students using the '5 Key Learning Questions' to gain a deeper understanding of the learning process.

The leadership team prioritised building teacher capacity. Professional Learning opportunities occurred during fortnightly PLT meetings and staff meetings. The Leader of Pedagogy assisted teachers to improve the efficiency of creating teaching and learning programs. She assisted class teachers to successfully participate in diocesan program audits. The Leadership Team worked specifically to guide staff to analyse student writing samples and use this information to plan next steps in instruction.

To further enhance teacher professional growth, each teacher identified an area for improvement aligned with the school's Annual Improvement Plan. A member of the Leadership Team supported each teacher to create a Professional Learning Plan. Meetings were set aside to discuss the plan and research effective teaching strategies. Teachers were encouraged to visit classrooms within the school and different schools within the diocese. The plans were regularly reflected on and indicated teachers were keen to improve their practice.

Mathematics continued as a focus area with a new teacher in the role of Mathematics Specialist Teacher (MaST). This teacher co-planned, co-taught and co-reflected regularly with the Early Stage



1 teacher. This teacher gained new skills and confidence to teach Mathematics; consequently, the students displayed extraordinary individual learning growth.

Literacy Learning Hubs continued to target each student's needs in K-4. These lessons provided explicit, targeted literacy instruction with a particular focus on phonics and spelling skills.

Primary students participated enthusiastically in a school-based 'Brain Olympia' day. Working in teams, students answered general knowledge questions, solved challenging mathematics problems, wrote an engaging speech and presented a short play. Students were given the opportunity to be extended in their learning by involvement in a school Spelling Bee, a Times Tables Challenge and external competitions in English, Mathematics and Writing.

3.2 Student Performance in National Testing Programs

3.2.1 NAPLAN

The school participated in the National Assessment Program Literacy and Numeracy (NAPLAN) with students in Years 3 and 5 tested. In Year 3, 8 students presented for the tests while in Year 5 there were 6 students.

In Literacy there were four elements tested. These were reading, writing, spelling and grammar and punctuation. In Numeracy, students were tested in number, patterns and algebra, measurement, data and space and geometry.

Commencing in 2023, NAPLAN test results are reported using proficiency levels.

Students' results show how they performed in each of the NAPLAN assessment areas against 4 proficiency levels:

- Exceeding: The student's result exceeds expectations at the time of testing.
- Strong: The student's result meets challenging but reasonable expectations at the time of testing.
- Developing: The student's result indicates that they are working towards expectations at the time of testing.
- Needs additional support: The student's result indicates that they are not achieving the learning outcomes expected at the time of testing. They are likely to need additional support to progress satisfactorily.

At St Joseph's Primary School, school and student performance are closely monitored. These tests are one means of gathering data on individual student and school achievement. School staff have participated in Catholic Schools Office information sessions on NAPLAN and Data Analysis workshops.

The following data indicates the percentage of St Joseph's Primary School students in the top two levels compared to the State percentage.

**Year 3 NAPLAN Results in Literacy and Numeracy
Percentage of Students in Levels Strong and Exceeding**

Reading	Writing	Spelling	Grammar and Punctuation	Numeracy
43.0	100.0	71.0	43.0	63.0



**Year 5 NAPLAN Results in Literacy and Numeracy
Percentage of Students in Levels Strong and Exceeding**

Reading	Writing	Spelling	Grammar and Punctuation	Numeracy
67.0	100.0	50.0	83.0	83.0

4.0 School Policies

4.1 Enrolment Policy

The Diocese of Armidale adheres to the policy as endorsed by the Bishops Commission for Catholic Schools 'Enrolment Policy' of Students in the Catholic Systemic Schools of the Diocese of Armidale. The Catholic Schools Office Armidale monitors the implementation of this policy. The policy has been developed in the context of government and system requirements. Children from families who are prepared to support the ethos and values of the Catholic Church may be considered eligible for enrolment. A pastoral approach is adopted for parents experiencing genuine difficulty with the payment of fees.

This school does not have any enrolment policies or support documents in addition to the Bishops Commission for Catholic Schools 'Enrolment Policy' for schools in the Diocese of Armidale. This policy is available on the school's [website](#) and the Armidale Catholic Schools Office [website](#).

4.2 Living Well, Learning Well - A Student Support Framework for the Diocese of Armidale

Living Well, Learning Well - A Student Support Framework for the Diocese of Armidale are policies and procedures justifying a model of student support that considers learning, wellbeing, school connection, behaviour, family-school partnerships and similar domains as inseparable and interrelated elements in the lives of children and young people and in the complex community that is the contemporary school.

The development goal of Living Well, Learning Well, and related policies was, and is, to ensure contemporary research and findings in fields of pedagogy, inclusion, behaviour support, pastoral care, bullying prevention and intervention, student voice, participation and connection to school, child and adolescent psychology, student wellbeing and staff collective efficacy are reflected in all language, policy, practice and protocols of the system and schools. It supports a whole-system ecological approach to understanding and acting on the complexity of factors that interact to shape and form the lives of children and young people.

At the heart of Living Well, Learning Well is a universal and unconditional positive regard for children and young people and a high regard for the collective capacity of a school staff team to increase learning, wellbeing and life-opportunity outcomes for children and young people. The full text of the school's Living Well, Learning Well procedures may be accessed on the school [website](#).

Corporal punishment is expressly prohibited in this school. The school does not sanction the administration of corporal punishment by school staff or non-school persons, including parents, to enforce appropriate behaviour in the school.



4.3 Student Protection Policies and Procedures

The role of the Catholic school in child protection is to protect children and young people and to promote and safeguard the safety, welfare and wellbeing of children and young people. This responsibility is shared with the whole community. Every school within the Armidale Catholic Schools Office (CSO) system of schools works within a statutory framework of cooperation with government authorities and other relevant agencies and with families in the care and protection of children and young people.

Schools have a key role to play in today's society by assisting students and families with child protection. The safety, welfare and wellbeing of students is given the highest priority in every preventative and protective action taken.

In caring for children and young people, we must act in their best interest and take all reasonable steps to ensure their protection. This involves sincere commitment to upholding children's rights to safety and their wellbeing, and taking comprehensive steps to create a child safe school organisation and culture, with shared responsibility requiring all Armidale CSO personnel to work together within a comprehensive framework to ensure action and accountability for child safety.

St Joseph's Primary School is committed to fulfilling its obligations and seeks to develop best practice to identify and address risk and harm, and to promote the wellbeing of all children and young people in Armidale CSO schools. The dignity of the human person is a central truth of the Gospel message of Jesus. In respecting the dignity of all human persons, Catholic school communities are called to ensure the welfare and safety of all of their members.

The protection of the students entrusted to our care, then, is a very serious responsibility. In taking up this responsibility along with parents, who are recognised as the primary educators and carers of their children, Catholic school communities are committed to ensuring Catholic schools have at their centre the total care of the whole student.

St Joseph's Primary School follows the guideline, policies and procedures as determined by Armidale Catholic Schools Office who provides policy, procedures, forms and links to other resources relating to child protection. These resources have been developed to guide and assist staff and to inform Catholic school communities. Further details can be accessed from the school's [website](#) which includes a further [guide for parents](#).

4.4 Complaints Handling Policy and Guide

The Diocese of Armidale has established a 'Complaints Handling Policy and Guide' which is implemented by this school. The rationale for this policy is that within the reality of the schooling experience, it is recognised that, from time to time, misunderstandings and differences of opinion will occur, and that these need to be resolved satisfactorily. Addressing such matters within a framework of dignity, respect and truth can provide powerful opportunities to model the love of Christ in the reality of the contemporary world. The Catholic Schools Office monitors the implementation of these policies.

No changes were made to the 'Complaints Handling Policy and Guide' this year.

The full text of the school's 'Complaints Handling Policy and Guide' may be accessed on the school's [website](#) or the administration office.

5.0 School Review and Improvement

Each year, the school develops an Annual Improvement Plan indicating the intended key improvements for student learning outcomes. The plan is drawn from the school's Strategic Improvement Plan and informed by the Catholic Schools Office Annual Improvement Plan. The school engages in an annual evidence-based evaluation of its effectiveness against these external standards in collaboration with the System Performance Leader.



Key Goals Achieved and Implemented in 2023	Key Goals for 2024
<p>Strengthened a Christ centred inclusive learning community through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Embedding the Living Well Learning, Well Framework particularly for parents. • Establishing a new model for IST support which is inclusive for all students and providing faith-formation opportunities for staff, students and families in the tradition of St Joseph. <p>Enhanced strong learning teams by embedding effective pedagogical practices informed by efficient data use through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Refining Learning Sprints. • Creating an explicit data plan. • Continuing to build teacher capacity to teach Writing and using the National School Improvement Tool (domains 2, 8 & 9) more strategically to effect change. <p>Increased parental engagement in all aspects of their child's education through:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Developing a welcome strategy for new families. • Providing regular opportunities for parents to visit the school for religious, learning, cultural and sporting events. • Assisting parents to understand contemporary learning through Literacy/ Numeracy information sessions, class newsletters, learning expos and video clips. • Advertising policies and procedures (e.g. Attendance Policy) regularly and indicating how parents can support the school to function effectively. 	<p>To encourage a Christ-centred inclusive learning community through strengthening the faith and wellbeing of all.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build stronger learning communities and family partnerships through the Living Well, Learning Well Student Support Framework. • Strengthen the school, family and parish team. • Reinvigorate RE pedagogy to create more opportunities of 'Encounter' for students and staff. • Further develop an inclusive culture for SWD, EAL/D and ATSI students. <p>To create a data informed team culture that improves pedagogy and enhances learning outcomes for all students.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continue to embed and reflect upon the 2024-2026 Non-negotiables of a Catholic Professional Learning Community. • Implement and embed evidence-based pedagogical and assessment practices into the curriculum through the use of the Clarity Suite. • Embed the K-2 English and Mathematics Syllabi and implement the 3-6 English and Mathematics syllabi. <p>To revisit the qualities of strong teams for students, staff and our community.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strengthen school teams by exploring the qualities of effective teams. Collaboratively identify team values, goals, roles and responsibilities of each team. • Encourage parental/ carer engagement in their child's education. • Communicate school policies and procedures to all stakeholders regularly, and seek feedback where appropriate.

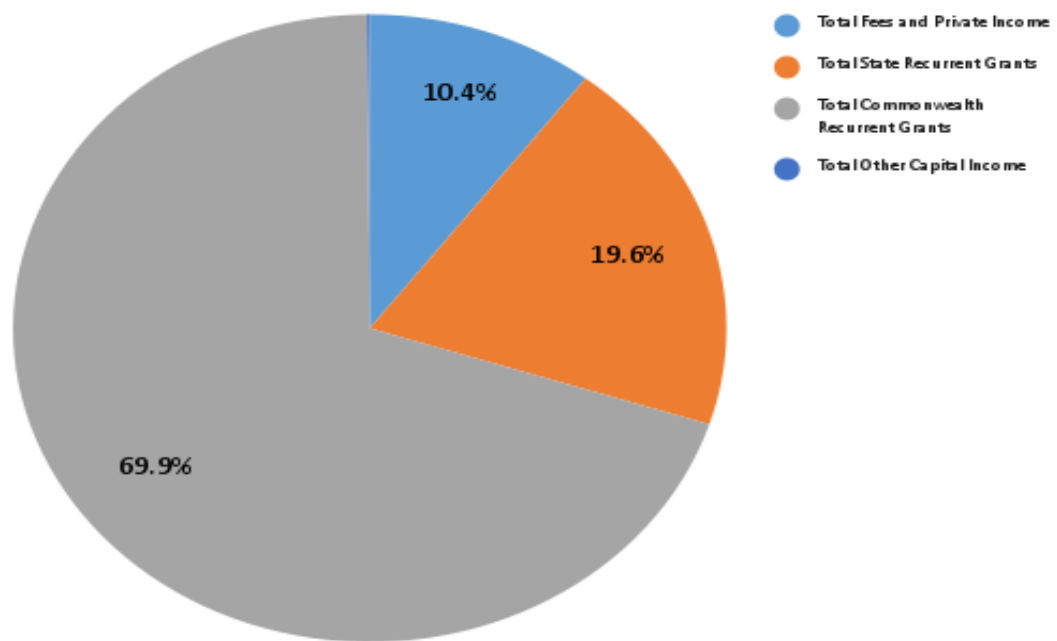
6.0 Financial Information

Catholic schools are accountable for all monies received. Each year, the Diocese of Armidale Catholic Schools Office submits to the Commonwealth Government a financial statement on behalf of the parish primary schools, K-10 schools and secondary colleges. This statement details the income and expenditure of each school. In addition, the financial accounts for each school and for the Catholic Schools Office are audited annually.

A visual summary of the income and expenditure reported to the Commonwealth Government for 2023 is presented below:



2023 Income - St Joseph's Primary School, Quirindi



2023 Expenditure - St Joseph's Primary School, Quirindi

